

The Perrot Family and Their Circle in South West Wales During the Later Middle Ages

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SUMMARY

Perrot historiography is rather thin on the ground but the Perrot family are particularly well endowed with contemporary source material (Chapter I).

Despite this, the historical facts regarding the origins and genealogy of the Perrots are buried beneath a cloak of myth, tradition and errors perpetuated for centuries (Chapter II, part I). But it is possible to construct a coherent genealogical framework and discussion, and to examine in some detail the various marriages of individual Perrots and to explain their significance. (Chapter II, part II).

Due to Pembrokeshire's lack of exposure to historical inquiry it is necessary to study the political geography, allegiance and structure of government of the county during the medieval period (Chapter III). Thus it is possible to measure and understand the political and military fortunes of members of the family particularly during the Glyndŵr revolt and the wars of the Roses (Chapter IV).

For all their political and social machinations, the family led a life of conventional piety and took a keen interest in the religious life of the county especially in view of their position as ecclesiastical landlords (Chapter V).

Although they were essentially a rural based family they soon turned to exploit the benefits accruing from urban membership and town development. They became closely involved with town government and burghal associations particularly in Haverfordwest (Chapter VI).

The evidence concerning their rural properties is particularly rich ranging from simple deeds to large scale royal surveys by Crown commissioners in the sixteenth century. Therefore, it is possible to study in depth the patient but imaginative growth and consolidation of a number of Pembrokeshire manors over two centuries (Chapter VII).

Any family history is incomplete without an appreciation of the homes in which they lived. Moreover, the remains of these houses, in some cases considerable, form a tangible link with the past and places the family in their physical environment (Chapter VIII).

CONTENTS.

SUMMARY.	i.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.	ii.
PREFACE.	iii.
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.	iv.
<u>BIBLIOGRAPHY.</u>	xii.

A. Original Sources: Unpublished.	xii
B. Original Sources: Published.	xv
C. Works of Reference.	xvii.
D. Secondary Works.	xix.
E. Unpublished theses.	xxx.

CHAPTER I. Introduction - The Sources.

Page 1.

A. The Literary Sources	1.
B. The Perrot Archive	8

CHAPTER II, Part I. The Origins and Genealogy of the Perrot Family.

A. The Genealogical Evidence.	15.
B. The Perrot Family's Origins.	19.
1. Norman-English Origins.	20.
2. Pembrokeshire Origins.	22.
C. The Haroldston Line.	27.
D. The Scotsborough Line.	37.
E. Minor Cadet Lines.	42.
1. The Woodstock Line.	42.
2. The Cheriton Line.	43.
3. The Caerforiog Line.	43.
4. Kidwelly Line.	44.
5. The Oxford and Laugharne Lines.	45.

CHAPTER II, Part II. Marriage and Family Relationships

A. The Socio-Economic Marriages of the Fourteenth Century.	51.
B. The Politico-Economic Marriages of the Fifteenth century.	69.
1. The Marital Arrangements and Political Connections of Sir Thomas Perrot.	76.
2. Marital Arrangements and Familial Connections.	84.
C. Marital Uncertainty in the Early Sixteenth Century.	88.
D. The Scotsborough Family Marriages.	91.

CHAPTER III. The Structure of Government.

A. The Political Geography of Pembroke shire.	108.
B. County Government.	122.
1. The Steward.	122.
2. The Treasurer.	131.
3. The Sherriff	138.
4. The Beadle	143.
5. The Escheator	145.

C. Local Government	148.
1. The Reeve	148.
2. The Beadle	151.
3. The Forester	152.
<u>CHAPTER IV. The Political and Military Fortunes of the Perrot Family.</u>	163.
A. The Early Perrots.	164.
1. The Dispute over the Lordship of Manorbier during the 1320s and '30s.	164.
2. The Dispute over the custody of Pembroke (Monkton) Priory.	172.
3. The Fear of Invasion during the 1370s.	175.
B. The Glyndŵr Rebellion.	178.
1. The Rebellion in Pembroke shire.	178.
2. David Perrot's Rebellion.	193.
3. Perrot Fortunes during the Rebellion.	207.
C. The Wars of the Roses.	212.
1. The Rise of Sir Thomas Perrot (c. 1398-1461).	212.
2. The Rise of John Perrot (c.1395-1461).	221.
3. The Struggle for Supremacy in Pembroke shire, 1450-54.	225.
4. The Wars of the Roses: The First Phase, 1455-61.	234.
5. The Consequences of Lancastrian Defeat, 1461-85.	245.
D. The Perrots and the Early Tudors, 1485-1530.	255.
<u>CHAPTER V. The Perrots and the Church.</u>	275.
A. The Conventual Clergy.	278.
1. The Priory of St. Nicholas, Pembroke.	279.
2. The Priory of St. Thomas the Martyr, Haverfordwest.	251.
B. The Regular Clergy.	284.
1. Nolton and Robeston West.	286.
2. Castlebythe.	259.
3. Haroldston St. Issels.	290.
4. Walwyn's Castle.	292.
C. Other Benefices and the Scotsborough Branch.	293.
D. The Family's Spiritual Ties with the Church.	295.

<u>CHAPTER VI. The Perrots and the Boroughs of South-West Wales.</u>	310.
A. The Major Boroughs of Pembroke shire.	310.
1. Pembroke-Early Perrot Contacts with the Borough.	310.
2. Tenby and the Scotsborough Line.	316.
3. Haverford and the Haroldston Line.	319.
4. Expansion and Consolidation under Sir Thomas Perrot.	322.
5. The Management of the Perrot Property.	325.
6. The Attractions of Haverford.	327.
B. The Lesser Boroughs of Pembroke shire and Carmarthenshire.	330.
1. Llanstephan.	330.
2. Kidwelly.	335.
3. Llawhaden, Laugharne, St. Davids and Newport.	337.
C. The Perrots and Borough Administration.	330.
D. The Parrots and their Urban Associates.	348.
<u>CHAPTER VII. The Perrot Family Estates.</u>	366.
A. The Lordships of Pembroke.	357.
1. The Manor of Eastington.	357.
2. Other Lands in the Lordship of Pembroke.	386.
B. Property in the Lordship of Carew.	390.
C. The Lordship of Wiston or Daugleddau.	392.
1. The Manors of Ambleston, Woodstock and Rinaston.	393.
2. Other Lands in the Lordship of Wiston.	401.
D. The Lordship of Roche.	402.
1. Descent of the Manors.	402.
2. The Manor of Robeston West.	406.
3. The Manor of Nolton.	409.
4. Other Lands in the Lordship of Roche.	416.
E. The Lordship of Haverford.	419.
1. The Manor of Haroldston.	419.
2. Other Lands in the Lordship of Haverford.	422.
F. The Lordship of Cemais.	426.
1. The Manor of Castlebythe.	426.
2. Other Lands in the Lordship of Cemeis.	429.
G. The Lordship of Pebidiog.	432.

1. The Manor of Ysceifiog (Skivog).	433.
2. Other Properties in Episcopal Manors.	440.
H. The Lordships of Narberth and Llanstephan.	442.
1. Narberth.	442.
2. Llanstephan.	443.
I. The Lordships of Laugharne and Walwyn's Castle.	448.
1. The Lordship of Walwyn's Castle.	448.
2. The Lordship of Laugharne.	452.
3. The Dispute over the Lordships of Walwyn's Castle and Laugharne.	453.
J. The Estates of the Scotsborough Parrots.	463.
<u>CHAPTER VIII.</u> The Houses of the Perrot Family.	494.
A. Popton.	495.
B. Eastington.	499.
C. Robeston West.	512.
D. Haroldston.	515.
E. Caerforiog, Gwar-Y-Coed and Woodstock.	521.
F. Scotsborough.	526.
<u>CONCLUSION.</u>	540.
<u>APPENDICES.</u>	543.
1. Genealogical Lists and Charts.	544.
11. Perrot Family Wills.	557.
III. Manorial and Estate Location Map.	562.
IV. House Plans and Drawings.	563.
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.	
The Perrot Family Coat of Arms.	Frontispiece.
The Political Geography of Medieval Pembroke shire.	Facing page 105.
The Location of Perrot Manors and Estates in Pembroke shire.	Facing page 562.
Plan of the Manor of Eastington.	564.
Plan of Eastington Castle.	565.
Artist Impression of Eastington Castle.	566.
Plan of the Manor of Robeston West.	567.
Plan of Haroldston House.	568.
Artist Impression of the Gatehouse at Haroldston.	569.
Plan of Scotsborough House.	570

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION — THE SOURCES

A. THE LITERARY SOURCES

‘For the Perrots had at one time been the proprietors of a large portion of the county, so that their history might in one sense be called the history of the county.’¹ So stated the president of the Cambrian Society, John Scourfield, at the eighteenth annual meeting of that society held, appropriately, in Haverfordwest in 1864. His presidential address came on the eve of the publication in the Society's journal, *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, of a history of the Perrot family in the county of Pembroke. Who were the Perrots and do they deserve such praise? These and, it is hoped, many other questions will be answered by this thesis, for it is the intention to rescue the Perrot family from the relative obscurity into which they have declined since the nineteenth century.

During the later medieval period the people of South- West Wales were well aware of who and what the Perrot family was. It is a measure of the family's success that by the end of the sixteenth century it is likely that the people of England and Ireland could answer the question as readily as the people of Pembroke shire. This was due to the life and career of that celebrated Elizabethan courtier, Welsh landowner and Lord-Deputy of Ireland, Sir John Perrot (1530-92).

Even today Sir John Perrot remains the most visible symbol and culmination of his family's progress over 200 years from an insignificant parochial ‘gentry’ family to one of national ‘baronial’ significance. And yet, although Sir John Perrot may be familiar to Tudor historians and other interested parties beyond the academic world, the question of who the Perrots were remains unanswered.

It is perhaps not surprising that whereas Sir John has remained a potent historical figure, the most authoritative analysis of his family's history rests largely on nineteenth-century scholarship. It is almost as if Sir John has become divorced from his forbears, a detached and isolated figure. A study of the Perrots should not therefore begin and end with Sir John Perrot; his pre-eminent position owed much to the successful careers of his ancestors.

That a full study of the history of the Perrot family should prove fruitful has long been suspected. In 1971 Professor R. A. Griffiths stated in his article entitled ‘The Cartulary and Muniments of the Forte Family of Llanstephan’, that ‘It is worth noting that several hundred Perrot deeds are deposited in the Exchequer K. R. alongside the Forte originals’.² Indeed, the Forte family documents and cartulary themselves formed part of what has become a larger collection of Perrot family deeds than perhaps even Professor Griffiths suspected existed. This collection, which will henceforth be termed the Perrot family archive, contains the deeds and documents of many other well known Pembrokeshire families.

These became connected, principally through marriage, to the Perrots and formed their close circle of relatives, friends and colleagues. The words of John Scourfield may be recalled and considered less of a congratulatory nature but more of great insight and perception. Scourfield's statement was amongst many in praise of the work of the Reverend E. L. Barnwell on the history of the Perrot family in Pembrokeshire; yet neither Barnwell nor Scourfield was aware of the scope of the documents pertaining to the Perrots. Barnwell's work, entitled 'Perrot Notes', was subsequently published in two volumes of *Archaeologia Cambrensis* (1855 and 1866). In 1867 he remedied the fragmentary way in which his work had appeared in the journal by publishing a single volume entitled, "Perrot Notes: or some account of the various branches of the Perrot family".

Barnwell's work was the first attempt at a professional history of the family and for its time it was both valuable and significant. However, it was marred by the author's reliance on tradition and, through no fault of his own, his ignorance of the vast wealth of deposited material in the Public Record Office. The original material that was known to him he used well; he also published a useful index, with a few selected transcriptions, of the documents to be found in the Public Record Office. As far as Barnwell was aware, there were only two parcels of various deeds in the Public Record Office; as is now known, there was a great deal more.³

Barnwell's publication is important, because it drew attention to the Perrot family as a suitable and interesting subject for research. Perhaps his greatest contribution lay in the genealogical field, for his family history was basically a narrative account of the lives and careers of the individual Perrots; each generation was dealt with systematically. Barnwell's printed pedigrees of the various branches of the family were fairly accurate and a great improvement, if only for their clarity and simplicity, on those found in Lewys Dwnn's volumes.

Barnwell, in common with other nineteenth-century family historians, made great use of the genealogies constructed by the sixteenth-century genealogist and antiquarian. Dwnn's work was edited and published by S. R. Meyrick in 1846, entitled *Lewys Dwnn's Heraldic Visitations of Wales*, and so it became available to a wider audience.

Despite Meyrick's enlightened editorship, Dwnn's work still contained glaring inaccuracies, though for the most part it was - and still is - a valuable contemporary source. Barnwell's pedigrees were based largely on Dwnn, although he did question many of Dwnn's findings for which he had no real answers. Indeed, Barnwell's theories range from the absurd to others of perception.⁴

Barnwell was the first to provide an historical sketch, if a somewhat flawed one, of the lesser known branches of the Perrot family, such as the Scotsborough and Caerforiog lines. His research on the most famous branch of the family, that of Haroldston from which Sir John Perrot descended, was assisted by two important original sources, namely, the fifteenth-century Haroldston Calendar and the sixteenth-century anonymous biography of Sir John Parrot. But it is clear that Barnwell did not make best use of the material contained therein.

(i) The Life of Sir John Perrot

The anonymous sixteenth-century manuscript biography of Sir John Perrot was edited and published in 1728 by Dr. Richard Rawlinson. This biography offers a sympathetic portrait of Sir John, but, as even Barnwell was forced to admit, 'the greatest portion of the work is devoted to his Irish campaigns, so that little is recorded of his proceedings in Wales'. Despite this, the biography's value, as far as the history of the family is concerned, owes much to its detailed pedigree of the main Perrot branch, from the family's supposed Norman origins to Sir John Perrot. Thus, the biography offers a sixteenth-century perspective on the identity and descent of Sir John's ancestors.

(ii) The Haroldston Calendar

A far more important contemporary document is the so-called Haroldston Calendar, which dates from the last quarter of the fifteenth century and, as yet, remains unpublished. The Calendar derives its name from the fact that it was housed in Haroldston house, a once fine mansion that now stands in ruins less than a mile from the town of Haverfordwest. The house was the former residence of the Harold family, of whom reference is made in the Calendar; they may have been the original builders but it is with the Perrot family that the house and estate have become more closely identified since Sir Thomas Perrot's move there in 1442. Hence the designation, by Barnwell, of the 'Haroldston branch' of the Perrot family.

Barnwell was fortunate to have had access to the Calendar, for it had only come to light in 1859, some six years before his publications on the Perrot family. It is evident that the Calendar had passed from the possession of Sir John Perrot (d.1592), the last member of the family to write in the volume, to his sons and successors, Sir Thomas (d.1594) and Sir James (d.1636), and to Sir Herbert Parrot (d.1683). According to Barnwell, the Calendar then went to the family of Captain Harris of Brunton; near Hereford.⁵ This is strange, for Sir Herbert's daughter and heiress had married Sir John Packington of Westwood, Worcestershire. The Packingtons inherited all of the former Perrot possessions, including Haroldston House and estate; that they should have received possession of such personal items as Sir John Perrot's portrait of 1583 and not the Calendar is curious. In 1859, the Reverend Berford Harris of Brunton sold the Calendar to the British Museum, where it remains amongst the Additional MSS. Registered as 22720.

Barnwell described the Calendar as a 'MS. volume of Services, which seems to have served as "the family Bible" of the Haroldston family'.⁶ The vellum document, which was bound at a later date, would seem to have indeed served as the 'family Bible' for it contains family memoranda, such as births, deaths and marriages, though the bulk of the Calendar is devotional in character. Barnwell's description of the Calendar's contents is not without its basic errors of transcription, but it is, nonetheless, worth noting. A more professional transcription of the Calendar is provided by Henry Owen; he even reproduced the 'coloured drawings and illuminated script in his faithful unpublished copy of the original now in the National Library of Wales amongst the Henry Owen MSS.'⁷

A Pembrokeshire landowner and 'squire' of Poyston Hall, Owen had a deep affection for, and interest in, the history of his native county. He was an historian whose varied works

reflected his professionalism. In 1902, Owen published his book, *Old Pembrokeshire Families*, which contained a chapter on the Perrots. Despite its brevity, Owen's chapter on the history of the Perrot family is far superior to that of Barnwell. In the preface to his book, Owen rightly acknowledged the work of Barnwell's near-contemporary, William Floyd.

According to Owen, 'Mr. Floyd was a careful and laborious antiquary'; of this there is no doubt, nor of the fact that his 'MS. Collections contain a wealth of information.'⁸ Floyd's researches in the Public Record Office during the late nineteenth century are of great importance, for they unearthed references that have been missing since the Office's classifications were reorganized at the end of last century.⁹ This is also true of many of the references given by Owen in his book; the classifications have defied all attempts, even with the full cooperation of present P.R.O. staff, at identification.¹⁰ Those few that have been located are presently amongst the Exchequer K.R. Ancient Deeds, series D (E.210).

Floyd and Owen were not the only historians to review Barnwell's work. In 1905, another distinguished Pembrokeshire historian, Edward Laws, published his article, 'The House of Scotsborough near Tenby', in *Archaeologia Cambrensis*. Although more a history of the house, Laws could not ignore the history of the Perrot family which, it seems likely, built the original structure and lived there for over three centuries. Laws stated clearly- that the work of Barnwell regarding this branch of the family was out of date, as a result of the recent accession of documents dating from the sixteenth century. This well illustrates the point that with the passage of time even the best historical work loses its authority and originality. Therefore, it is a great tribute to these early historians that their studies remain valuable works of reference and the staple diet of historians today.¹¹

There is obviously a case for a serious review of the history of the Perrot family which, hitherto, has remained the preserve of nineteenth and early-twentieth century historians. The most recent attempt to deal with the Parrots as a subject for serious academic review and research is that of P. C. C. Evans. In 1940, he completed an MA thesis on the life and career of Sir John Perrot.¹² In order to place his subject in some kind of historical context, the first two chapters were devoted to the history of Sir John's family; it is nothing more than a resume of the work of Barnwell. The thesis remains the most detailed and authoritative work, although there is a case for a further review of Sir John Perrot, despite the publication, in 1962, of G. D. James's *Sir John Perrot*. Mention should be made of the work of the eighteenth- and early nineteenth century antiquary, Richard Fenton. Although he never made the Perrots the subject of his research, his work on the history of Pembrokeshire included the family as a major influence on events in the county. On the whole, Fenton relied heavily on the work of the sixteenth century antiquary George Owen; nevertheless, Fenton's work contains a number of transcripts of documents relevant to the Parrots that have since been lost.¹³

This, then, completes a brief survey of the literary 'sources relating to the Perrot family. Admittedly, Perrot historiography is rather thin, but no attempt has been made to include those publications, of which there are a fair number, which include the Perrots, particularly Sir John Perrot, as a side issue with perhaps a pertinent discussion ranging from a few lines to a page.

B. THE PERROT ARCHIVE

From their modest beginnings at the end of the thirteenth century, the Perrots rose to become one of the greatest landowners in Pembrokeshire by the end of the sixteenth-century. Fortunately, there exists a wealth of evidence, for the main or Haroldston branch of the family at least, in the form of charters and deeds, which record the family's landed acquisitions over a period of 300 years. This collection merits the name of the Perrot family archive and is defined in terms of those documents that pertain to the acquisition, disposition and disputation of property.

The documents survive today as a result of the attainder for treason of Sir John Perrot in 1591. This act may have been a disaster for the family at the time, but it was a boon for present-day historians. The resulting confiscations of Perrot property and possessions necessitated the setting up of a number of commissions to deal in detail with such a large bulk of documentary material and property; hence a most detailed description of the family's property was made at the end of the sixteenth century. This extensive survey of the family's estates, despite its late date, proves of immense value in tracing the development of various Perrot properties during the preceding centuries. A full account of Sir John's properties in South Wales, compiled by the royal commissioners in 1591-92, has been included in full by P. C. C. Evans in his thesis. The reports of the royal commissioners is contained in Exchequer, Land Revenue, Miscellaneous Books (L.R.2), and Special Collections, Rentals and Surveys, Portfolio Series (S.C.12).

The Perrot family archive was brought to London and there it remained, despite the restitution by the Crown of Sir John's properties to his son and heir, Sir Thomas Parrot. Sir Thomas's untimely death in 1594, less than eighteen months after his father, may have been partly responsible for the retention of the archive in London.¹⁴ He was succeeded by his illegitimate brother, Sir James Perrot, who, for some unknown reason, never gained full possession of the family's properties which had been resumed by the Crown on the death of Thomas.¹⁵

Up until the end of the nineteenth century, the archive remained intact, lodged in a number of large boxes; unfortunately, it was ill-advisedly split up by archivists at the Public Record Office in 1890. At present the archive stands at 1,183 deeds, of which the great majority (995) are to be found in the Exchequer, K.R., Ancient Deeds, series D (E.210). There is still an unsorted box thought to contain mainly Elizabethan material, though a number of medieval deeds have also been located there, in a poor state of repair, and these are currently being added to Exchequer, Augmentation Office, Ancient Deeds, series B (E. 326).

The Perrot archive may be divided in two sections, namely, documents that relate directly to the Perrot family, and those with an indirect connection with the family. Up to 500 documents (429) involve members of the Perrot family, illustrating their role in the land market. The remaining documents illustrate the careers of various other families, including the Harold, Wyse, Wogan, Forte and Picton families, all of which became involved with the Perrots through marriage or business connections. The most important point is that the properties mentioned as being in the ownership of the above families were later possessed by the Perrots.

Even today the Perrot collection of deeds and documents is so large, in spite of the likely loss of many more over the centuries, that it requires some form of indexing. It seems likely that the Perrots, as one of the pre-eminent families in Pembrokeshire from the mid-fifteenth century onwards, would have employed a system of indexing and referencing themselves, however crude.

The Forte family cartulary provides a good example of what a relatively minor family could produce in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.¹⁶ In fact, this cartulary could have provided the Perrots with a model, for after 1432 they inherited the entire Forte landed inheritance, and it appears almost certain that the cartulary followed the properties it described.¹⁷ However, the Perrots produced not so much a cartulary but more a simple list of deeds in their possession. There are, in fact, two such lists in existence, remnants perhaps of a series of such inventories, and they contain only brief descriptions of the original deeds. The method of cataloguing appears to have taken the form of lists of endorsements found on the dorse of the original deeds, where the name of the property was the usual form of reference used.

The earliest of the two lists or schedules consists of two vellum sheets sewn together to form a single document some eighteen inches long.¹⁸ The schedule relates exclusively to property that formed part of the Eastington estate, and it contains thirteen references in all. In most cases the original deeds survive and they range from the late-thirteenth to the mid-fifteenth century.

The latest deed referred to was drawn up in 1456, which may point to the date of the schedule's compilation, especially in view of the fact that Thomas Perrot esquire was busy consolidating that estate at that very time. It seems possible that there existed a similar schedule of reference deeds for each of the family's estates, but they have since been lost.

The second and later schedule is much larger and contains sixty-eight references written on a roll of four long slips of paper with a narrower slip attached.¹⁹ This list differs from the first in that it refers to properties dispersed throughout the county, the only cohesive element being that the majority refer to former Wyse family properties, whose heiress had married Thomas Perrot esquire sometime after 1440. Around half of the original deeds referred to in this schedule survive, and the fact that but for the list all traces of the lost deeds would remain unknown gives its existence great value. The latest deed referred to on this larger schedule dates from the 1490s, which may suggest a date for its compilation around the early years of the sixteenth century.

There may have been another attempt to compile a schedule of deeds, for amongst the Exchequer, K.R., Ancient Deeds, Series DD (E.211), there are seven large documents sewn together.²⁰ They have nothing in common except for bound arrangement; indeed two of the documents are wills. They range from the year 1443 to 1514, which suggests that they may have been so arranged around that time by Sir Owen Perrot. The existence of family wills is an interesting and important matter that should not be neglected, and the Perrot family have eight such documents still surviving.

It is probably no exaggeration to say that the wealth of primary source material relating to the Perrot family has no equal in South-West Wales. This is all the more remarkable for a family that never attained the privileges and status of baronial rank. They remained, for all the glittering career of Sir John Perrot, a 'gentry' family tied to their locality. Sir John was the only member of the family to attain national prominence, and although he gained the lordships of Laugharne, Llanstephan, Carew and Walwyn's Castle, he never obtained a peerage from 'the Crown.

The Perrots were, essentially, a family of the locality; they rarely strayed beyond the bounds of the county of Pembroke before the sixteenth century. In the past, historians have tended to take the view that the history of the family was minor in comparison with that of Sir John himself, and that his career was the climax of familial development, when the family finally came of age. In one sense, there is some truth in this, for Sir John's success was the product of his family's development over a number of generations. However, the history of the family during the later middle ages, from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century, stands in its own right.

It is with the medieval Perrots that this thesis is largely concerned: if dates need be included, then 1295-1530 seem appropriate. At present the year 1295 has the earliest recorded reference to a Perrot in Pembrokeshire. The evidential circumstances surrounding the documents in that year suggests that 1296 indeed records the original settlement and foundation of the family in part of the Welsh march. On the other hand, 1530 is largely an artificial concluding date. It is convenient, for that year records the birth of Sir John Perrot and the imminent death of his father Thomas (1531).

The twenty-year gap between the birth of Sir John and the attainment of his majority c. 1550 can be seen as an historical vacuum, when the steady development of the family was arrested for a short time before resuming after mid-century - almost a division between the old and the new, medieval and modern. However, the year 1530 will not prove an impenetrable barrier to further research, for it will be necessary to stray beyond the designated scope of this thesis to include various aspects of the family's later history that have a bearing on its past.

In certain areas, such as those of family genealogy, marriage, religion, homes and estates, a wider spectrum of discussion will be adopted to include details of the family beyond 1530 and even up to the death of the last member of the family, Sir Herbert, in 1693. This will allow the thesis to develop a more credible analysis of the family as a unit and not as a disjointed view of the Perrots at one major stage in their development.

NOTES

1. Arch. Camb., 3, X (1864), 350.
2. R. A. Griffiths, 'The Cartulary and Muniments of the Forte Family of Llanstephan', B.B.C.S., XXIV (1970-71), 311-55.
3. Barnwell's parcels consisted of Exchequer K.R., Ancient Deeds, series DD (E.2II); Various Accounts (E.I0I); Inquisitions post mortem, series II (E.I50).
4. The most modern genealogical work on the Perrots remains that of P. C. Bartrum in his welsh Genealogies A.D. I400-1500 (18 vols., Aberystwyth, 1983), IX, 1435-37
5. Perrot Notes, 129
6. Ibid., 126
7. N.L.W., Henry Owen MS. 1359 E
8. O.P.F., preface.
9. N.L.W., William Floyd HS. 3791 C.
10. I should like to thank Dr. D. Crook and Miss M. Condon of the Public Record Office for their time and correspondence on this matter. It seems that the once compact Perrot family collection was mistakenly split up by archivists in the last century.
11. The work of the Pembroke shire historian Francis Green (d. 1942)), is important his MS. collection, housed in the Dyfed Record Office (Haverfordwest, for it contains one of the largest collated bodies of material on Pembroke shire families in general.
12. F. C. C. Evans, 'Sir John Perrot' (University of Wales M.A. thesis, 1940).
13. The Fenton MS. collection is housed in the National Library of Wales.
14. Sir Thomas died on In February 1594. N.L.W., F. Green MS. 314. 304.
15. This may have been due to the claim on the estate laid by Sir Thomas's heiress, Penelope, though it is not clear what part of the Parrot estates she acquired.
16. E.I63/9/39. For full details vide infra, chapter VII.
17. E.211/400.
18. E.101/524/6 The list has been printed by Barnwell, Perrot Notes 148-52
19. E.211/393A-G These documents have been printed in full by Barnwell, Perrot Notes. 153-56.

CHAPTER II

THE ORIGINS AND GENEALOGY OF THE PERROT FAMILY

Any attempt to recount a medieval family's history in relation to known historical fact is hampered by an inadequate genealogical framework to which to refer. The provision of sound and accurate genealogy is essential to any discussion of that family's varied role in contemporary society. However, constructing a family genealogy is an extremely complicated and frustrating task.

A. THE GENEALOGICAL EVIDENCE

The Perrot family appear to be well provided for, in genealogical terms, for both contemporary and modern genealogical charts exist.¹ Closer scrutiny reveals errors of both minor and major proportions and, in view of the discovery of new evidence, an up-to-date reappraisal is overdue.

The earliest family genealogy, one composed by members of the family, dates from the last quarter of the fifteenth century and is contained in the so-called 'Haroldston Calendar'.² The Calendar begins with a list of Perrot family genealogically arranged in direct descents.³ Only those male members of the family, along with their wives, through whom the line passed by direct descent, were included by the Calendar's author. Its authorship can almost certainly be assigned to William Perrot, for he alone is described in the present tense. Moreover, he was called an esquire, which would fix the date of the calendar's composition between 1474, when he succeeded his father, and 1501 when he was knighted.⁴

The significance of the genealogy is that it was added to at intervals, for it is evident that the completed list was the work of three individual hands. The bulk of the genealogy is in the original hand, probably that of William Perrot, for it ends with his young, unmarried son Owen. It begins with a Peter Perrot from whom William was eighth in descent, and whom William thought was the founder of the family's fortunes. In a second hand, miles was added to William's name, noting the fact of his knighthood in November 1501. Why William had not added this himself remains a mystery. Other additions by this second hand include the name of Owen's wife, Catherine Poyntz, and of their son, Thomas Perrot, who as yet was unmarried. It seems likely that this second hand was Thomas's, for his father was succeeded by his eldest son Robert, and Owen might have been expected to include his heir rather than his youngest son, Thomas.

It is perhaps strange that Thomas did not add the term miles to the name of his father; this was done by a third hand. There is no doubt that the third hand was Sir John Perrot's, for (as E. L. Barnwell pointed out) the handwriting compares well with that known to be Sir John's.⁵ Moreover, the abbreviation Ar. (for Armiger), meaning esquire, was added to his father's name, as was the latter's wife, Sir John's mother, Mary Berkeley. Incidentally, Sir John included himself along with his knighthood, an honour he received from Edward VI in 1549. It is interesting to note that Sir John added two other names, Stephen and Sir Andrew, to the beginning of the genealogy, thus pushing the list back a further two generations. The Haroldston Calendar genealogy, then, was the product of

three different hands adding their contributions over a number of years: William's contribution may be assigned to the period 1474-1501, Thomas': to 1526-27, and that of Sir John to the period between 1547 and 1555, 'before his marriage to Ann Cheyney, who is omitted from the list.⁶

The next development in recording the genealogical history of the Perrot family occurred in the late sixteenth century, with the work of Lewis Dwnn and the anonymous biography of Sir John Perrot.⁷ Of the two, the earliest published work would seem to have been that of Dwnn in his *Heraldic Visitations of Wales*. This seems to be indicated by the fact that Dwnn's genealogy of the Perrots of 'Iestyn-ton a Chaeryw' is accompanied by the date 1588, although additions were made up to the year 1613. The details in Dwnn's genealogy almost exactly match those contained in the sixteenth century anonymous biography of Sir John Perrot, thus allowing an interesting comparison. Published in 1725 by Dr. Rawlinson, this biography presumably dates from the last decade of the sixteenth century, after the death of its subject in September 1592.⁸ On the other hand, Sir John's son, Thomas, is referred to in terms which suggest that he was still alive at the time of writing; this would place authorship between 1592 and 1594. It might suit the tone of redress that pervades the whole work, for the author of the biography certainly showed sympathy for the unfortunate fate that had befallen his subject. The biography may well have been commissioned by Sir John's son and heir, Thomas, in an effort to clear his father's name and restore his tarnished reputation.

The genealogies of Dwnn and the biography push the Perrot family tree back to the reign of Henry I, with the addition of details of certain twelfth century Perrots. The similarity between the two genealogies requires that they be analysed in conjunction with each other. The only entry that marks a difference is the fact that the biography refers to the Norman origins of the family, whereas Dwnn - and indeed the *Calendar* - deals only with their Pembroke shire origins. It is almost certain that the details supplied to both Dwnn and the biography come from the same source, namely, Sir John Perrot. There is another extant Perrot genealogy, now deposited in the British Museum, which is of seventeenth-century date.⁹ Its authorship is unknown but it may have been based on the work of Sir James Perrot, Sir John's bastard son and eventual successor. Its structure and details are similar to those of the biography, because it includes the reference to the family's Norman origins, but it terminates with the death of Sir Thomas Perrot in February 1594.

The aforementioned contemporary genealogies are valuable because they establish beyond doubt the main line of the Perrot family's descent. This certainty, a rare occurrence in genealogical composition, is achieved with the aid of corroborative evidence. At the point where this evidence fails and myth and legend take over, the genealogies play a crucial part in reflecting the beliefs of the family as to what their true origins and descent were. That the genealogy is correct in recording the family from the late thirteenth century onwards is remarkable, and testimony to the strong interest and knowledge shown by members of the family in that history.

With the advent of more professional standards of scholarship in the mid- nineteenth century, an attempt to provide a fuller Perrot genealogy was made by the Reverend E. L. Barnwell.¹⁰ His approach, though not without its faults, was far superior to

that of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century antiquarians such as Richard Fenton. With the aid of a number of original documents deposited in the Public Record Office, and evidence from other gentry genealogies, Barnwell set about adding flesh to the bare bones provided by the calendar, Dwnn and the biography. He compiled the first modern genealogical chart to include other members of the Perrot family, such as younger sons and daughters, as well as the head of the family in each generation. Indeed, Barnwell's genealogies of 1866-67 remained the staple diet of historians until the review by P. C. Bartrum in the 1970s and 80s.¹¹

As late as 1940, P. C. C. Evans was compelled to rely on Barnwell's work to illustrate the descent of the family until it reached his own subject of interest, Sir John Perrot. ¹² Although Barnwell's work was reviewed by Henry Owen in 1902 in his more professional, but sadly brief, article, he did not provide a genealogy to illustrate his own additions and corrections.

As a result, the myths and legends of the sixteenth-century genealogies and the errors of the nineteenth-century historians have been perpetuated. Far from being served by a wealth of genealogical evidence, the present-day historian is hampered by its very multiplicity. This is evident from the most recent attempt by P. C. Bartrum to compose as reliable a genealogy as is possible. Yet, P. C. Bartrum stated at the outset that his work was intended only to provide a basic framework upon which he expected other researchers to build. His work is valuable, for it takes into account the wealth of evidence deposited in the National Library of Wales over the last few decades, including deposits of papers of other gentry families which had incidental connections with the Perrots. The case for a revision of the Perrot family's genealogy has never been stronger.

B. THE PERROT FAMILY ORIGINS

An analysis of the family's origins involves a discussion of their alleged Norman-English origins and their original settlement in Pembroke shire.

I. NORMAN-ENGLISH ORIGINS

'And that this may appear to be a Truth, and no fayned Fable, here followeth the leneal Discent and Pedegree of Sir John Perrott, and his Auncestors, from theyr first Arrival into Pembrokeshier'.¹³ Thus began the anonymous sixteenth-century biography of Sir John Perrot before it embarked on a description of the Perrot family's genealogy. The declaration is impressive and may have been believed by the author; on the other hand, the subsequent genealogy may have been what his subject, Sir John Perrot, wished to believe.

Alone amongst the genealogies, the biography has a unique reference to 'Perrott', the founder of the family, who was stated to have followed William the Conqueror from Normandy. The writer felt compelled to support this statement with relevant evidence: 'as it appeareth by the Chronickles, and by the Recordes of Battayle Abbey'. The validity and accuracy of the Battle Abbey records are highly suspect because they were changed to suit the needs of the many noble families who wished to connect themselves with the Conqueror. The reference to the chronicles may in part refer to Domesday Book of 1086 and to lists in later historians and topographers such as Hollinshed and Leland.¹⁴ It has to

be admitted that there may well be a grain of truth in the seemingly absurd connection between a Perrot and Normandy in the reign of William I. Domesday Book records the substantial landholdings of a 'Pirrot' in Essex, Suffolk, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire.¹⁵ The name is an acceptable variation of the more commonly accepted form of Perrot, and it is certainly of French origin in a region roughly corresponding to Normandy.¹⁶

The descendants of this 'Pirrot' had supposedly come to adopt and use the form 'Perrot' by the mid-thirteenth century. The history and descent of this branch of the family has been documented to some degree, and it seems that their principal landed interests had shifted further south to Kent, in the knight's fees at Knowlton and Ringleton, by the beginning of the twelfth century. Here they flourished at least until the end of the sixteenth century. There is no doubt that the biography intended 'Pirrot' to be the founder of the Perrot branch of the family of Pembroke shire and therefore an ancestor of Sir John.

Was Sir John Perrot aware of the existence of a Perrot branch of the family in Kent, the direct descendants of 'Pirrot'? And if so, was it this knowledge which prompted him to promote his links with a figure from the Norman past, as other more noble families were moved to do? It seems highly probable that Sir John Perrot was not only aware of the Kentish Perrots, but that he may have had personal contact with one of them. It is significant that Sir John's first wife, Ann Cheney, came from Kent, and that her father, Sir Thomas Cheney, was a colleague in local administration with his Kentish compatriot, Richard Perrot.¹⁷

Perhaps this had aroused Sir John's interest and prompted him to forge a link between himself and this Richard which, if proved, would enhance his own pedigree and give it a Norman connection. Richard Perrot may also have cherished such a link, or at least raised no objection to Sir John's supposition, for the latter was a powerful figure at court; hence the interest in Sir John's pedigree shown by Holinshed and Leland. With a distinguished pedigree, Sir John could compete on an equal level with the most prominent among contemporary nobility.

On the other hand, the biographical reference to Sir John's Norman origins may have derived from a simple desire to display a link, real or imagined, with a twelfth-century Perrot. No attempt was made to elaborate on the relationship between the twelfth century Perrot and the first of the Pembroke shire Perrots. The genealogies of Dwnn, the biography and the Calendar begin in earnest only with the family's Pembroke shire origin.

2. PEMBROKESHIRE ORIGINS

Without exception, the three contemporary genealogies are accurate with respect to the main descent, beginning with Stephen Perrot who lived at the end of the thirteenth-century. However, this cannot be said of the first five generations mentioned in the respective texts. These lack corroborative evidence and the brief details accompanying the entries are scarcely believable.

The myth and legend which surround the family's supposed origins derives from Dwnn and the biography. Both concur in the belief that the first of the Pembroke shire

Perrots was called Stephen, and that he settled in the county during the reign of Henry I as part of the Flemish influx.¹⁸ Apparently this Stephen married Eleanor, 'Lady of Istington', the daughter and sole heiress of Meirchion ap Rhys, who was fourth in descent from Hywel Dda, 'Kinge of South Wales, and the Lycurgus or Lawmaker of that Land'. Stephen and Eleanor's son and heir was called Andrew; he was a knight and an important figure, if the genealogies are to be believed. Andrew was supposed to have married Janet Mortimer, a daughter of Ralph Mortimer, earl of March, and Gwladys Ddu, the daughter of Llywelyn ab Iorwerth ('the Great') of Gwynedd. From this, it would seem that Sir John Perrot's desire to establish an impressive pedigree knew no bounds, as he promoted a link with two royal Welsh rulers. In fact, the Perrot link with the princely houses of Deheubarth and Gwynedd bears all the hallmarks of sixteenth century invention and self-esteem. It was also an attempt to justify the family's right to their substantial Welsh landholdings.

There is little doubt that this description of the family's origins is absurd and has no foundation in fact. The Perrots did not initially settle at Eastington, though from the point of view of Sir John this may have seemed so after 200 years of occupation; rather did they first settle at nearby Popton. Moreover, there is no evidence to link the descendants of Hywel Dda with Eastington, which was occupied by a Welsh family surnamed Ystin and later by an English family called Hilton during the thirteenth century. Again, the marriage between Sir Andrew Perrot and Janet Mortimer is chronologically impossible, a fact noted by Barnwell, Perrot was certainly separated by a century or more from Janet. The absurdity is compounded by the further statement that Sir Andrew was supposed to have built the castle of Narberth, and that he was lord of the lordship of Narberth by virtue of a grant from Arnulph de Montgomery, the original Norman conqueror of Dyfed. There is no evidence whatsoever to link the family with Narberth; indeed, their acquisitions in the area had their roots in the late fifteenth century.¹⁹

Although admitting the impossibility of Sir Andrew's marriage to Janet Mortimer, Barnwell generally accords the sixteenth-century genealogies far too much respect; his only concession was that Meirchion ap Rhys was sixth and not fourth in descent from Hywel Dda. The existence of Stephen and Andrew was of crucial importance to Sir John Perrot, and they were added by him to the top of the genealogical list in the family's Calendar. Neither of their wives' names were added nor the name of the male of the next generation, William, the supposed heir of Sir Andrew. According to the sixteenth-century genealogies, this William married Margaret, the daughter of Sir Walter Herford. This seems to present a problem if this early part of the genealogy is to be regarded as fiction, for Herford did in fact exist and was certainly living in the 1240s.²⁰ He was also an important figure holding three knight's fees, in addition to part of the lordship of Wiston.

To add credibility to a union between a Perrot and a Herford female, amongst the quarterings of the coat of arms of Sir John Perrot's grand-daughter, Penelope, is Gules, three eagles displayed argent of Herford.²¹ However, the Herford family had died out by the sixteenth century, and so Sir John and his heirs may have been able to use the coat of arms with impunity. There is no evidence to suggest that the Perrots had used these arms earlier than the sixteenth century. On the other hand, the Perrots' right to bear the Herford arms may have been a result of the marriages between the ancestors of Sir John and the Wogans of Wiston at the end of the fifteenth century. For it seems that a Wogan had

married the heiress of the Herford branch of the family in Pembroke shire, and hence, according to Henry Owen, 'The arms of the Herfords - three eagles displayed - remained in the arms of the barony of Wiston'. The arms of Penelope Perrot included the Wogan coat of arms, argent on a chief sable, three martlets or. And yet, for all the significance of the Herford connection, real or imagined, the only omission from the family genealogy in the Calendar was William and his wife, Margaret Herford .

Before proceeding further, a word must be said of the three Perrot females, Eleanor, the aunt of the aforementioned William, and the latter's sisters, Catherine and Elizabeth. The first genealogical appearance of all three occurs in the nineteenth-century work of Barnwell, but again there is no evidence to substantiate his claims, let alone the marriages of these Perrots to Einion Fawr of Coed, Caradog ap Hywel and David Wynter respectively. Only the last named is known to have existed, or at least his family did, the Wynters of Carmarthen. Curiously, P. C. Bartrum has included Catherine and her marriage to Caradog ap Hywel in his genealogy, which would seem to lend credibility to an incredulous claim! This Caradog was the ancestor of Sir Richard Newton (Cradock), the fifteenth-century chief justice of the Court of Common Pleas, with whom the Perrots did establish a familial link: did retrospective notions of alleged familial ties help to create the myth of an earlier marriage?

The son and heir of William and Margaret Herford was Peter Perrot, who, according to the biography, had married 'the Daughter of Coniston'. Dwnn, on the other hand, gives her name as Mable Coniston, the daughter and heiress of Henry Coniston; while the calendar offers another variation, Mable Davison. The confusion as to her correct identity is reflected in the work of Barnwell, who cites her as Mable Coniston, Galveston or Kinston. Peter Perrot's inclusion in the genealogy of the calendar is interesting in that his name appears in the original hand of William Perrot, dating from the late fifteenth century. Thus, the existence of this Peter was current among fifteenth century Perrots, and his inclusion in a mostly accurate genealogical list is noteworthy. But there is no more ²⁵ evidence to support the existence of this Peter Perrot than of his three ancestors.

'With Stephen, the son of Peter, we stand on surer ground' so stated Henry Owen, and he is undoubtedly right. So is his belief 'that little reliance can be placed on any Welsh pedigree before the fourteenth century'.²² In fact, so far as reliable evidence is concerned, Stephen must be regarded as the true founder of the Perrot family fortunes in the county of Pembroke. The earliest recorded reference to a Perrot in Pembrokeshire - Stephen - occurred in September 1296, when he was in receipt of land at Popton.²³ Indeed, the evidence strongly suggests that Stephen established a permanent settlement in the county at that time. In two further references, in 1295 and 1297, Stephen is recorded as receiving important and substantial grants of land from his father-in-law in Popton.²⁴ Possession of Popton thereupon placed Stephen amongst the landholding elite, as a direct military tenant of the earl of Pembroke.²⁵ The half-knight's fee of Popton remained the Perrots' principal holding and home at least until the last quarter of the fourteenth century, when it was superseded by Eastington. Stephen survived until 1338, which suggests that in 1296 he was a young man in his twenties eager to acquire land and settle down.²⁶

But where did he come from? Without firm evidence the answer must be conjecture, but nonetheless it is worth considering. There are a number of possibilities. Stephen may have been a retainer of William or Aimer De Valence, successively lords of Pembroke. Contemporary evidence shows that the great majority of Aimer de Valence's retainers came from England; therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that Stephen was recruited from Aimer's English estates, which were situated in counties containing thriving branches of the Perrot family descended from Pirot.²⁷ Though not conclusive, the available evidence does not reveal a Perrot among Aynor's personal retainers. It is possible, but less likely, that Stephen was recruited from the Valence estates in France by Aimer's father William. That Stephen should appear in South Wales in the last decade of the thirteenth century may be significant, for in the previous decade the prince of Gwynedd had been defeated. Royal campaigns in Wales had attracted many adventurers and younger sons with a view to gaining a share in the spoils of war. The period after the Welsh defeat witnessed a substantial influx of English immigrants, mainly former soldiers and workmen.

It may be significant that Sir Ralph Perrot V of the Kent branch served in South Wales against Llywelyn ap Gruffydd in 1257.²⁸ Ralph was summoned for service in 1263 but did not attend; indeed he fought against the king in the service of Simon de Montfort in the civil war. After receiving a pardon, he served with the king, Edward I, in Wales against the Welsh in 1277 and 1282-83. It is known that his son and heir, also called Ralph, served with his father in the first Welsh war of 1277; may Stephen Perrot have been a younger son, accompanying his father and elder brother to Wales and deciding to stay there and carve out his own career?

C. THE HAROLDSTON LINE

This was the main branch of the Perrot family in Pembroke shire, and it was by far the most powerful and influential line. To describe it as Haroldston 'line' is perhaps a little misleading - a relic of nineteenth-century expediency. After all, the Perrot's other major residences were at Eastington and Carew. It is ironic that in the sixteenth century Lewis Dwnn referred to the family as of 'Iestynton a Chaeryw'. The family were associated with five residences. From their original home at Popton (1296-1360s), they moved to Eastington (1360s-1440), Robeston West (1440-42), Haroldston (1442-1554) and Carew (1554-1592). Thus, Dwnn's description was based on the belief that Eastington was the original residence, and that Carew had become the residence of Sir John Perrot. In contemporary records, members of the family were frequently described as of all these places with the exception of Popton. That Haroldston was preferred by Barnwell and has remained the designation ever since owes much to its convenience. In terms of the length of occupation by the family, Haroldston can claim a primacy over both its predecessors and successors.

The usefulness of the fifteenth and sixteenth-century genealogies in the Calendar, Dwnn and the biography is limited in identifying members of the Perrot family other than the male heirs and their wives. The main thrust of genealogical investigations therefore shifts from the sixteenth to the nineteenth and twentieth-centuries, that is, to Barnwell and F. C. Bartrum. It is the intention in this chapter to follow, where appropriate, the genealogies of P. C. Bartrum and Barnwell. Changes will be made only when documentary evidence dictates. Proof of the existence of female members of the Perrot family is difficult

to obtain before the mid-fifteenth century, and we are often forced to rely on incidental and indirect evidence. On the whole. P. C. Bartrum's work is reliable. His main weaknesses are those of omission, rather than of commission.

According to Barnwell, Stephen Perrot had four children, two sons - John and Thomas - and two daughters - Catherine and Lettys. P. C. Bartrum agrees, except that he omits Thomas, and that is justifiable. There is no doubt that John was Stephen's son and heir; he appeared in 1326 as a burgess of Llawhaden, succeeded his father around 1338 and died on 13 March 1349.³⁰ Barnwell's belief that Stephen had a younger son named Thomas proves erroneous, for in fact he had a son called Peter. The importance of the identity of this younger son lies in the fact that he founded the cadet branch of the family of Scotsborough, which will be discussed in the next section of this chapter. Unknown to either Barnwell and P. C. Bartrum, there was a third son called Richard, who would seem to have had no heirs. His appearance in contemporary records is fleeting. First, as early as November 1310, when he witnessed a grant of land near Eastington from John Hamund to Richard's father, Stephen Perrot.³¹ In an undated document, Richard received 19 acres at Greenhill from his father; the property lay in the vicinity of Popton and was to form part of the later manor of Eastington.³² In July 1344, Richard witnessed a grant of land in Pembroke, while his last known appearance was in November 1359 in the role of mainpernor for the prior of Monkton priory.³³

In addition to the two daughters of Stephen, Catherine and Lettys, there was a third daughter - Joan - who was unknown to the genealogists. Joan was noticed by Henry Owen, but he calls her Isolda; yet the reference is clearly to Joan.³⁴ She made her one and only appearance in surviving materials as the guardian of her nephew Peter, the son of John Perrot, in 1373.³⁵ Thus, in all Stephen and his wife Mabel had six children, three boys and three girls. The main line of the family descended through John and from him to Peter, who was a minor at the time of his father's death in March 1349, and still had yet to achieve his majority by the time his father's inquisition post mortem was taken in April 1353. Peter was John's only child, or at least the only one on record, which suggests that John may have married late in life, for he was certainly in his fifties at the time of his death. Peter led an uneventful life and died relatively young. By May 1378, leaving a young son and heir to succeed him.³⁶ Indeed, with a succession of minorities in the family, it is remarkable that they survived at all.

Peter had two children, a son Stephen and a daughter Catherine. Both were no doubt named after their great-grandfather and great-aunt. A minor in 1378, Stephen achieved his majority in 1393, thereby placing his birth round about 1372.³⁷ This suggests that he was the second born, for his sister married a man many years her senior, and Catherine would seem to have been some 18 years older than her younger brother. Problems occur in framing the Perrot genealogy in the generation after Stephen, who last appears in October 1428.³⁸

There is no doubt that Stephen's son and heir was Thomas (hereafter known by his more familiar designation of Sir Thomas). He first appears in January 1422 and he died on 10 April 1461.³⁹ Both Barnwell and P. C. Bartrum agree on the existence of a sister named Ann but not of a sister cited Alice. P. C. Bartrum is the first to note that Alice was a daughter

of Stephen, who married Henry Malefaunt. The most serious disagreement between them relates to Henry and Agnes, the alleged children of Stephen by a second marriage. That both Barnwell and F. C. Bartrum agree that they did indeed exist is important, but the latter correctly dismissed the suggestion that Stephen Perrot had married Margaret Stepney. Thus, to assume that Henry and Agnes were the children of Stephen is as faulty as to suppose that a second marriage took place. There is irrefutable proof that Henry existed and sufficient circumstantial evidence to accept Agnes.⁴⁰ While it is possible that Agnes was the daughter of Stephen by his first and only marriage, this is unlikely on two counts. Agnes would have been too old by more than a generation to marry her husband, and Henry can confidently be identified as one of the sons of Sir Thomas Perrot.⁴¹ Henry first appears in contemporary records in August 1464 and he died between 1 and 12 April 1491.⁴² These dates are entirely consistent with those of other sons of Sir Thomas.⁴³ In view of this, it is reasonable to propose that Agnes was the sister of Henry but the daughter of Sir Thomas rather than of Stephen Perrot.

With the addition of Henry and Agnes, the number of children born to Sir Thomas reaches eleven. There is no doubt that Sir Thomas married twice which may have caused the confusion over the supposed second marriage of his father Stephen. Sir Thomas's second marriage took place after 1442. Therefore, it is possible to ascribe tentatively the children to either the first or the second marriage. Sir Thomas had four sons, Thomas, Stephen, John and Henry, and seven daughters, Margaret, Joan, Agnes, Emma, Anne, Jane and Ellen.⁴⁴ The sons of the first marriage were undoubtedly Thomas and Stephen because of the date of their appearance in the records (that is, the 1440s); Henry and John do not appear until the 1460s.

Thomas (hereafter known by his more familiar designation of esquire) was the eldest son and heir of Sir Thomas and makes his entry in the documents in 1441; he died in July 1474.⁴⁵ His brother Stephen first appears in February 1448, but he died tragically young in June 1451.⁴⁶ Henry flourished between 1464 and 1491, while his brother John first appears in March 1462 and died in June 1493.⁴⁷ Sir Thomas Perrot was certainly well endowed with daughters; all of them, as far as the evidence is concerned, may be attributed to his first marriage. After all, their respective husbands were at least a generation older than themselves and they were all, with one exception, married during the 1440s. On the other hand, Ellen does not appear until November 1453 and then as the recently married wife of Richard Wyrriot. It seems likely that she was the last born child to Sir Thomas Perrot and his first wife.⁴⁸ Ellen was twice married and survived at least until September 1501, outliving her familial contemporaries by a margin.⁴⁹

The main line of the family continued through Thomas Perrot esquire, who emulated his father in taking two wives. It is important to note that Thomas' younger brother John founded a cadet line of the family which continued to flourish at least a generation after John's death. It would seem that Thomas's two children, William and Jane, were the offspring of his first union, for William married his step-mother's sister. He appears in July 1474 immediately after his father's death, but he was dead by 8 June 1503 when probate was granted of his will.⁵⁰ The evidence from William Perrot's will plays a crucial part in constructing the genealogy at this juncture, for there is a discrepancy with the work of Barnwell. According to Barnwell, William had nine children, two males and seven female - Owen, Jankyn, Maud, Anne,

Alice, Joyce, Margaret, Isabella and Jane. However, only five children are mentioned in the will - Owen, Anne, Alice, Margaret and Isabella. What can account for on Owen Perrot, it is clear that Owen died on 15 December 1521 and was succeeded by Robert, whose age was given as 17 years at the time of his father's death.⁵⁵ On 17 June 1524, the wardship of Robert was given to Sir John Fitzjames and Sir William Denys, but their custody did not last long for Robert came of age on 20 July 1525.⁵⁶ Thus, Robert was born probably about 20 July 1504; his younger brother Thomas was 15 years old at the time of their father's death, which suggests a date of birth around 1505-6. The confusion over the succession of Thomas and Robert was probably due to the fact that Robert died intestate and unmarried before September 1526.⁵⁷ At that time, Thomas appointed attorneys to take possession of the properties and possessions of his recently deceased brother and his late father. Thomas had evidently reached his majority by that date which suggests that he was born somewhere between July and September 1505.

A further matter which certainly adds to the confusion over the succession of Robert and Thomas arises from the fact that the biography makes mention of a Mr. Perrot, the uncle of Sir John Perrot and a brother of Thomas.⁵⁸ Barnwell admits that his Christian name is not given, 'but may be safely supplied from the pedigree which gives Robert as the only paternal uncle of' Sir John.⁵⁹ This Mr. Perrot held a position of importance as reader in Greek to the young king, Edward VI. However, as has been proved, Robert died in 1526 and cannot be identified with this 'paternal uncle'. This naturally leads to the conclusion that there must have been a third, hitherto unknown, son of Owen of whom P. C. Bartrum was also ignorant. There is a deed in the Bronwydd collection which would seem to confirm the existence of such a son. In April 1549? 'Rees Perrot, the son of Owain Perrot of Haroldston, Knight', granted a tenement and land in Cemais to Morgan ap William Lloyd.⁶⁰ Apart from this document and the reference in the biography, there is no further evidence of the life of Rhys Perrot.

The main line descended through Thomas; unfortunately, he died young, around 26 years of age, for probate was granted on his will on 7 October 1531.⁶¹ His son and heir was the famous Sir John Perrot who, contrary to popularly held belief, was not the bastard son of Henry VIII. According to the inquisition post mortem on Thomas in September 1532, his son John was 2 years old, which would put his date of birth in 1530.⁶² Thomas also had two daughters, Jane and Elizabeth; this is confirmed by Dwnn. According to Dwnn, Sir John married twice, and by his first wife he had his son and heir, Thomas, and by his second a son and two daughters — William, Lettys and Ann. Of course, it is well known that Sir John had children by his many mistresses, of whom Sybil Jones was a particular favourite. By her Sir John had two children, his eventual heir James and a daughter Mary.

After Sir John Perrot's death in September 1592, he was succeeded by Thomas, who died young on 14 February 1594, less than 15 months after his father's death.⁶³ The tragedy for the family was that his only son, Robert, died a minor; thus, he was succeeded by his only daughter Penelope. It would seem that the Perrot family line would therefore descend through Thomas's half brother William, but this was not to be for on 9 July 1597 he died in Dublin.⁶⁴ As it happened a large share of the family property, which had been forfeited to the Crown on the attainder of Sir John, and restored to his son and resumed by the Crown again on his death, passed to Sir John's illegitimate son James. Born in 1571, James was a worthy successor to the headship of the family, but after his death in January 1636 the family line effectively came to an end.⁶⁵ James had failed to provide a male heir, leaving

the bulk of his estates to Herbert Perrot of Wellington in Herefordshire. His nomination of Herbert is a mystery since there appears to have been no familial connection between the two. A more appropriate successor might have been James's nephew and godson, Thomas Laugharne, the son of his half-sister Lettys. Although he is mentioned in James's will and was highly thought of, he was passed over in favour of the unknown Herbert

Thus, after three centuries the Haroldston line finally perished due to the failure of male issue and several premature deaths. Indeed, Sir John's ignominious end in the Tower of London on a charge of treason seems almost symbolic of the fate that was to overtake the family within half a century of his death. As can be seen from the genealogy, the Perrots were never well endowed with male issue, except for the four sons of Sir Thomas and the three sons of Stephen. As early as the third and fourth generations, the family might have lapsed due to the prolonged minorities which were result of the successions of Peter and Stephen, the only male representatives at that time. It is a curious coincidence that during the sixteenth century the males of the family again died tragically young, with the exception of Sir John, who was 62 years old at his death; by contrast, his father, uncle, two sons and grandson had early deaths. The demise of the Haroldston line in the sixteenth century was also the experience of their cousins' line the Scotsborough branch, whose origins lay in the fourteenth century.

4. THE KIDWELLY LINE

The earliest appearance of this family is in April 1488, when Thomas Perrot, a layman, petitioned the Pope for a dispensation to marry his third cousin, Agnes Lightfoot of Haverford.⁹⁰ This means that Thomas's great-grandfather had married into the Lightfoot family towards the end of the fourteenth century. This would seem to rule out a link with the Haroldston line and suggests, rather, the Scotsborough branch, if only because of its inconclusive pedigree. The most likely candidate from whom Thomas of Kidwelly was descended was Thomas, the son of Peter, the founder of the Scotsborough branch. It is known that Thomas son of Peter married twice; his first wife, Isabel, may have been a Lightfoot. If so, by when did Thomas of Kidwelly descend? There are two candidates chronologically possible: John, the son of Thomas the younger, and chancellor of the county; and his cousin Jankyn (d.1469) the brother of David and the son of John and Isabel Verney.

It is clear from a town rental of Kidwelly for the years between 1493 and 1503 that Thomas had a brother Robert and that both were burgesses in the town, and owning a few scattered rural properties in the vicinity.⁹¹ Throughout the sixteenth century, a number of Perrots appear in the town records, but it is impossible to connect them with either Thomas or Robert; suffice it to say that in all probability they were descended from one or both of them. During the 1540s and '50s, the family was represented by John and Robert Perrot, the latter by far the more prominent.⁹² The only evidence which seems to link this Robert and the earlier Thomas (the first to be mentioned as being of Kidwelly) is the fact that both owned the property known as Halkynchurch ('Halgynchurche'.) This same property seems to have passed from Robert after 1570 to his son, John William Perrot. Members of this family seem to have survived even into the early eighteenth-century.

5 THE OXFORD AND LAUGHARNE LINES

A word must be said on these two branches of the Perrot family for they alone, with the possible exception of the Kidwelly branch, survived until well into the eighteenth century. [----]

Virtually nothing is known of the origins of the Laugharne branch of the Perrot family. In Sir John Perrot's deed of settlement of his estates in 1584, there appears among the witnesses a Thomas Perrot of Brook, 'one of the cosens of the said Sir John.'⁹⁸ This suggests a close family relationship, certainly a great deal closer than that enjoyed between the Haroldston and Scotsborough branches by this date. Thomas Perrot of Brook may have been the son of Rhys, son of Owen Perrot, and thus a first cousin to Sir John Perrot. Certainly a residence in Carmarthenshire seems to have been the lot of the younger son in the sixteenth-century. Sir John settled his own younger son, Sir James, at Westmead in the lordship of Laugharne which formed part of the Perrot family possessions in that locality. It is significant that the manor of Brook itself lay a mere half-a-mile east of Westmeade. The Perrots of Laugharne and Eglwys Cummin flourished through the seventeenth century; indeed, the last male of the family to be mentioned, in May 1677, a David Perrot of the parish of Llansadurnen (which incidentally contained Brook), had so fallen in status to be described as a yeoman.⁹⁹ His widow Amy was still alive in October 1699, but with no mention of children it is presumed that the family died with David and Amy.¹⁰⁰

Thus, although the main Haroldston and Scotsborough branches of the family had disappeared by the early seventeenth-century, Perrots were still to be found. It is a sad fact that these minor lines did not share in the wealth of their cousins; indeed, they had suffered a sharp decline in status. Their relative poverty and obscurity have resulted in their neglect by historian and genealogist alike.

NOTES.

1. There are some seven separate Perrot genealogies in existence dating from the fifteenth to the twentieth centuries
2. B.M., Add. MS. 22,720; N.L.W., Henry Owen MS. 1389B.
3. Ibid., 22,720 f.2.
4. O.P.F., 54; William Shaw, *The Knights of England* (2 vols., London 1971). 1, 33, 145.
5. Perrot Notes 128-29.
6. Thomas's contribution to the Calendar has been limited by the fact that he succeeded his brother in 1526 and married his wife, whom he omitted, in 1527.
7. S. R. Meyrick (ed.), *Lewys Dwnn's Heraldic Visitations of Wales* (2 vols., Llandover, 1846), I, 89-90, 133-34.
8. Anon. *Sir John Perrot*, ed. R. Rawlinson (London. 1728), 14-17. The D.N.B. incorrectly gives the date of Sir John's death as June 1592.
9. B.M., Harleian MS. S835 f.70b-71b. There is another similar Perrot genealogy probably dating from the seventeenth century in B.M., Harleian MS. 1975b.
10. *Perrot Notes*, 131-34
11. P.C. Bartrum *Genealogies* (1983), IX, 1435-37-
12. P. C. C. Evans, 'Sir John Perrot' (unpublished University of Wales M.A. thesis, 1940).
13. Rawlinson. op. cit., 14.
14. *Perrot Notes*, 1.

15. W. Farrar, Honours and Knight's Fees (4 vols., London, 1925). III,155; G.E.C., X, 473
16. H. Barber, British Family Names (London, 1894), P. H.Reaney, The Origins of English Surnames (London, 1967).
17. Perrot Notes, 3-4.
18. Dwnn, I, 89. The editor of Dwnn's work offers a precise date for the initial settlement of Stephen - 1112!
19. I should like to thank Mr. D. Jones of St. David's University College, Lampeter, on this point. His research into the lordship of Narberth has uncovered no contemporary evidence to support a Perrot tradition of influence in the area.
20. O.P.F., 37.
21. Perrot Notes, 65.
22. O.P.F., 37
23. E.210/7911.
24. E.210/2329 (2); G.R.O. (Cardiff) CL.I/3680.
25. C.I.P.M., VI, 336; P.R.P., 111, 86.
26. J. R. Rees, Slebech Commandery and the Knights of St.John (London, 1900), 75, 77.
27. J. R. S. Phillips, Aymer de Valence, 1307-24 (Oxford,1972), ch. IX, 253-90.
28. G.E.C., X, M73. The following paragraph is based on this source.
29. Although Dwnn does add a few details to the pedigree at its mid-fifteenth century stage, his work becomes a full pedigree in the sixteenth century.
30. J. W. Willis-Bund (ed.), The Black Book of St. David's(London, 1902), 149; C.I.M., III, 35;P.R.P., III, 97.
31. E.210/9043; E. 101/524/6m3 no.30.
32. E.211/400 no.13; O.P.F., 52.
33. G.R.O. (Cardiff) CL.I/3675; C.F.R., 1356-59, 115.
34. O.P.F., 53.
35. E.211/400 no.9; N.L.W., William Floyd MS. 3791C. 124.
36. C.F.R., 1377-63, 101.
37. E.210/217. It was in March 1393 that Stephen's wife was invested with her property, which had been held in trust during her minority. It seems likely that both had been betrothed whilst still minors.
38. Owen, Pemb., II, 485.
39. C.A.D., 111, n90; 2.210/moo DO-10, 11; B.M., Add. MS. 22,720 f.86.
40. Both Bartrum and Barnwell agree as to her existence, while the Warren family of Trewern include her in their genealogy. The relationship between the Warrens and the Perrots became very close.
41. Agnes's husband was William Warren, the son of her father's second wife by an earlier marriage. He was born around the 1420s; if, on the other hand, Agnes was the daughter of Stephen, her birth would have been around the late fourteenth century.
42. E.210/2735, 5025. Henry's will was made on 1 April and probate was granted on the 12 April.
43. Thomas lived 1440-74, John 1462-93, Stephen 1448-51.
44. The uncertainty as to the identity of one Perrot daughter arises from the fact that she appears in a poem by Lewis Glyn Cothi as Annes (which suggests Agnes), even though there was another daughter of that name. On the other hand, Annes may have meant Anne. Perrot Notes, 78.

45. E.210/5692, 1941, 2691.
46. N.L.W., Slebech Documents, no. 280; B.M., Add. HS. 22,720 f.66
47. E.210/2728; Episc. Reg., II, 654, 658. John was alive and well in May 1493, when he and his colleagues presented the living of Llys-y-Fran; however, he did not re-appear in a similar capacity in July, thereby suggesting that he had died in June.
48. E.210/4066.
49. C.A.D. III, 501
50. E.210/1941, 2697; E.211/397.
51. E.210/5137; C.A.D. III, 501.
52. Perrot Notes, 32.
53. O.P.F., 55.
54. L & P IV, i, 464.
55. E.150/1215/2, 3, 5.
56. See note 54.
57. E.210/4684.
58. Rawlinson, op. cit., 36.
59. Perrot Notes, 32.
60. N.L.W., Bronwydd Deeds, no. 1061.
61. Prob. 11/24/8m58.
62. E.150/1215/6; 1216/3; C.142/89/119
63. O.P.F., 58-9.
64. Perrot Notes, 57.
65. Ibid., 189-94.
66. E. Laws, 'The House of Scotsborough', Arch. Camb., 6, V1,(1906), 84.
67. J. G. Edwards (ed.), Calendar of Ancient Correspondence Concerning Wales (Cardiff, 1935), 232.
68. C.I.P.M., XII, 74-5, 364-5.
69. William Floyd MS. 3791C, 124; C.143/389/25; P.R.P. III, 41.
70. N.L.W., William Floyd MS. 3791C, 124.
71. C.P.R., 1396-99, 342; P.R.P., III, 41
72. E. Laws, 'Sepulchral Slab of Isabella Verney in Tenby Church', Arch. Camb., 5, XV (1898), 64-66.
73. E.210/5045.
74. H. T. Evans, Wales and the Wars of the Roses (Cambridge, 1915), 44; see also J. H. Wylie, 'Notes on the Agincourt Roll', T.R.H.S., 3V (1911). Details of his career will be found in R. A. Griffiths, Principality, 252-53.
75. G.R.O. (Cardiff) CL.I/3695; N.L.W., Badminton Manorial Records, no. 1502; J. O. Halliwell (ed.), John Warkworth, A Chronicle of the First Thirteen Years of the Reign of King Edward IV (Camden Series, X, 1839), 7.
76. G.R.O. (Cardiff) CL.I/3678.
77. This claim to a share of the Roche inheritance will be dealt with in chapter VII.
78. Owen, Pemb., II, 485-86; N.L.W., Bad. Man. Rec., no. 1564; E.210/4365.
79. Episc. Reg., II, 500, 562, 654, 658; D.R.O. (Tenby) Tenby Borough Muniments (Unsorted). The document is a deed recording a quitclaim of interest in town property, namely Scotsborough, between Gruffydd Chepman and William Perrot.
80. P.R.P., III, 61-2.

81. Ibid., 239-40.
82. D.R.O. (Tenby) T.B.M. (Unsorted). This document records a lease of property in Heywood by John Perrot to Thomas Gawle.
83. C.142/154/78.
84. E.210/2728.
85. C.A.D., 111, 551.
86. E.210/2697.
87. E.211/668. This relationship will be fully discussed in Chapter VII.
88. E.210/5018; E.211/399.
89. E.211/393F. Owen Perrot then granted all the family properties in the lordship of Pebidiog, within which Caerforiog was located, to his attorneys.
90. Penitentiary Archive, Register of Matrimonial Cases, Vol. 37 f.79v. I should like to thank Mr. M. Yates for this reference.
91. W. H. Morris, 'A Kidwelly Town Rental of the Early Sixteenth Century - temp. Henry VII', C.A., 11 (1975), 74-83.2.
92. N.L.W., Muddlescombe Deeds, nos. 66, 73, 1152, 1160, 1560, 1976. 2096, 2125, 2151, 2196.
93. B.M., Harleian MS. S523 f.306, 6832 f.3hh: N.L.W., Francis Green MS. 327, 482.
94. B.M., Add. MS. 12507 f.306. Robert obtained the right to bear the Perrot coat of arms shortly before his untimely death in April 1550.
95. Ellen, sometimes referred to as Eleanor Perrot, of Woodstock. C.A.D., III, 463.
96. In terms of chronology it is entirely possible for George to have been the son of John the younger, and thus the second cousin of Owen. Their common ancestor would have been Sir Thomas Perrot (d. 1461).
97. Perrot Notes, 82.
98. Ibid., 179-80. Francis Jones recently suggests that Thomas of Brook was a descendant of Owen Perrot through his younger son John. However, there is no evidence to confirm the existence of such a son named John, nor that he was settled at Brook by his father. * F. Jones, *Historic Carmarthenshire Homes and their Families* (Carmarthen, 1967) 14-15.
** Roger later accepted the existence of John in 'NLW Roll 135' NLW Journal 1998 p399 (65): "The plaintiff, Thomas Perrot of London, formerly of the Brook, was lineally descended from Sir Owen Perrot's fourth son John (d.c.1560s). Under the terms of a deed of settlement of his estates issued by Sir John Perrot in 1584, Thomas's father had been named as a beneficiary in the event of the deaths of the issuer's sons, namely Sir Thomas (d.1594), William (d.c.1587) and Sir James (d.1637). After Sir John Perrot's attainder for treason his estates were forfeit to the Crown and from 1594-1608 Sir James and Thomas (plaintiff's father) worked together to recover them."*
99. N.L.W., Llwyngwair Deeds, nos. 14106, 14109, 14110, 2034
100. Ibid., 2059, 137911.
101. For a fuller discussion of marriage, the church and women in medieval society, see D. Jenkins and M. E. Owen (eds.), The Welsh Law of Women (Cowbridge, 1980); W. S. Holdsworth, A History of English Law, Vol. III (London, 1923); R. R. Davies, Lordship and Society in the March of Wales, 1282-1400 (Oxford. 1993).
102. A deed in the Perrot archive details such marital arrangements between William Roche and William Lopyn the elder, concerning the marriage of their children in 1338. E.210/8948. Compare the marriage indenture.